



# Executive Director's Update

Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association

33 Forge Parkway Franklin, MA 02038 | 508-541-7997 | [miaa.net](http://miaa.net)

**An Update from Executive Director Robert Baldwin**  
Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association

**August 24, 2023**

## Fall Season Reminders:

### Fall 2023 Schedule Commitment Deadline

With practices and tryouts for Fall 2023 sports now under way, and competitions scheduled to begin in a little more than a week, this is a reminder that the MIAA schedule commitment deadline is **Friday, September 1**.

All schedules for **Cross Country, Field Hockey, Football, Fall Golf, Soccer, Fall Swim & Dive, and Girls Volleyball** must be entered into Arbiter by the end of the day on September 1. After that point, no changes can be made to your opponents or the number of games/matches that can be played.

Please be sure to check the [MIAA Sport Limitations Information Sheet](#) for the maximum number of competitions allowed per week and per season in each sport.

After the September 1 commitment deadline, all schedules will be considered **FINAL**.

### Cooperative Team and Middle Level Waiver Applications

Last year the DAC's placed deadlines for submitting Cooperative Applications and Middle Level Waiver Applications. ML waivers and Coop Applications "... cannot be applied for after the first possible date of competition for each season." The final day(s) of application for Fall sports are:

- Golf: August 25
- Football: September 5
- All other sports: September 3

Applications submitted after these dates will not be considered. Link(s) to [Middle Level Waiver](#) and [Cooperative Team](#) guidelines.

### MIAA Tournament Passes

MIAA Tournament Passes will be mailed to the High School Principal beginning the week of August 28<sup>th</sup>, to those schools who have submitted their Institutional Dues.

### Statewide Tournament Director Positions

The MIAA is currently looking to fill Tournament Director positions for the following fall sports:

- Volleyball – Fall & Spring
- Wrestling – Division 1
- Wrestling – Division 2

### MIAA 2023-2025 Handbook – Revision, Clarity, Searchability

The current 2023-25 MIAA Handbook has a new look for greater clarity and organization. All new rules, voted in January 2023 have been incorporated into the current version of the handbook found on the MIAA webpage. Additionally, during this summer, the entire handbook was reviewed and rewritten for clarity to increase better understanding for member school leaders. Part of this process involved removing all icons from the book. Many icons contained important information which is now incorporated into the appropriate rule. Icons were not searchable for content but with all necessary language removed from the icon and inserted into the rule it will be easier to understand and find necessary information.

At the beginning of the book, the previous long and detailed passages have been converted to links that can be accessed when necessary. This reduces the length of the book overall but includes links to all of the same information. A few other big changes include combining all Bona Fide Team Member Information into one rule, Rule 45. Previously there were three rules, 45, 88 and 96 with Bona Fide information. All information is the same, albeit rewritten for clarity and for the avoidance of repetition. Another rule of note is Rule 49: Sportsmanship. This rule was rewritten to help AD's and principals find information easily and quickly for each constituents' responsibilities: officials, student, coach, and athletic director.

### New Student and Coach Disqualification Forms

The [MIAA Student Contest Disqualification Form](#) and [MIAA Coach Contest Disqualification Form](#) have been updated for the 2023-24 school year. Please make sure to have these updated forms available at all interscholastic contests and discard any previous versions of the forms. When a student or coach is disqualified from a contest, these updated forms must be completed by the game official and submitted to the athletic director in charge of the contest, or designee, before leaving the site. Please reference [MIAA Handbook Rule 49](#) for additional school requirements when a student or coach is disqualified from a contest.

### MIAA Welcomes New Chief Technology Officer

The MIAA is pleased to announce the hiring of Leo Brehm as Chief Technology Officer, as Nancy Palie has retired.

Leo brings a wealth of experience in technology as it relates to the educational space, including previously serving as Director of Technology for Newton Public Schools and Sharon Public Schools. He will be overseeing all aspects of technology for both the MIAA and MSAA.

Leo will begin work with the associations on September 11. Please welcome him to the MIAA family.



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## MIAA Student Eligibility and the Waiver Process

Please be reminded of the 2023-25 MIAA rule changes that were approved by the membership and effective July 1, 2023 ([click here](#)). While each rule change should be reviewed carefully, we wanted to bring your attention to the following rule changes that directly impact student eligibility and the waiver process:

- League advisory votes are no longer required to be submitted with student eligibility waivers (proposal 39).
- Additional language was approved to be added to MIAA rule 59, Time Allowed for Participation After First Entering Grade Nine (proposal 19). This will impact waivers beginning with the 2023-24 school year. In these instances, waiver applications cannot be submitted and will not be accepted for review. This rule change was supported by a vote of 311-24-10.
  - Added to rule 59.1.1 - A waiver shall not be permitted for a student who has demonstrated proof of passing grades and earned enough credits to advance to the next academic grade level.
  - Added to rule 59.2 - A waiver will not be permitted for students who choose to repeat a grade they have already successfully passed. These instances do not satisfy the criteria outlined in rule 59.2.
- Beginning in 2023-24, all standard coach and student contest disqualifications in all sports will be one (1) game, unless indicated otherwise by the game official on the disqualification form (*proposal 12 and 13*). However, any disqualifications earned during the 2022-23 school year that have not been served, will remain two (2) games, if that is the length of the suspension owed.
  - For example, if a soccer, ice hockey or baseball player was ejected from the final game of the season during this past school year, they would still owe two games to start their respective season next school year. The rule is applied in this manner because the suspension was earned prior to the rule change going into effect when a standard disqualification for these sports was an automatic two games.

As a reminder, below are the seasonal deadlines for student eligibility waiver submissions as outlined in MIAA rule 87.1. These are firm deadlines and late waivers will not be accepted.

- Fall – September 22, 2023
- Winter – December 15, 2023
- Spring – April 1, 2024

## MIAA Constitution Revision

At the 2023 MIAA Annual Meeting, the Assembly approved revisions to the [MIAA Constitution](#).

## MIAA Launches Website Rebuild Initiative

The MIAA recently partnered with Gravity Works Design, based in Lansing, Mich., on an initiative to redesign and rebuild the association's website, [miaa.net](http://miaa.net). The project launch follows a nearly yearlong process of discovery and vetting of potential partners, which included input from the Ad Hoc Technology committee and the MIAA Board of Directors.

Among the top priorities of the redesigned website will be:

- Ease of use for school personnel, student-athletes, officials, and the general public
- An improved infrastructure for submitting forms and other critical data
- A more modern approach to communicating important and timely MIAA information and news of general interest
- Integration with Arbiter to present schedules, scores, and tournament information

The initial phase of the new website is projected to launch in early 2024, with additional features to be unveiled in later phases.

## Sports Medicine Resources

As the school year is beginning, please be prepared for practice and competition with medical and safety resources.

Medical Personnel at varsity football games: Please remember that for all varsity football games, each team must employ a licensed physician, licensed athletic trainer or certified EMT to be with their team.

Heat Stroke and other resources: This Monday, first day of fall sports practice/tryouts for many sports, a school had a WBGT reading of 81 for the practice. ([see MIAA Heat Modification Policy](#)) This allows for a maximum of two hours' practice, the next level begins at 84.1, limiting practice to 1 hour. The final level begins at 86.1 not permitting practice at all. During that practice, a student sat down to hydrate and rest, appeared fine at first but very quickly turned non-responsive. All staff and students quickly responded with an ice bath and called 911. The result was positive in the end due in large part to the preparation, equipment/resources on site, and action by coaches, students, and medical staff. Just a reminder for all to prepare for emergency with careful planning. Many resources, such as Lightning Safety, Emergency Action Planning, CPR/Sudden Cardiac Arrest, etc. can be found on the MIAA Sports Medicine page [here](#).



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## Sportsmanship Honor Roll (2022-23)

Each year, the MIAA Sportsmanship Honor Roll is published to recognize member schools that did not have any students or coaches disqualified from an athletic contest at any level for the entire school year. Please [CLICK HERE](#) to review the draft 2022-23 MIAA Sportsmanship Honor Roll. If your school is included on this list, please double check to confirm that no student or coach disqualifications were received during the 2022-23 school year. Conversely, if your school is not included on this list and did not receive any disqualifications during the 2022-23 school year, please contact Donna Harrington at [dharrington@miaa.net](mailto:dharrington@miaa.net) by Friday, September 15. The Sportsmanship Honor Roll will be considered final after this date and honor roll schools will be recognized at the annual MIAA Sportsmanship Summit.

## MIAA Student Advisory Committee

The MIAA Student Advisory Committee held their orientation on August 22, 2023. Twenty-eight (28) student leaders from across the Commonwealth participated in team building exercises and goal setting activities at the MIAA Office. These students are representing the 200,000 student athletes across the MIAA. [CLICK HERE](#) to view the list of 2023-24 MIAA Student Advisory Committee members.

## Student Ambassador Information

Registration for the 2023-2024 MIAA Student Ambassador Program is now open! Principals and Athletic Directors can register students by [clicking here](#). More information about the MIAA Student Ambassador Program can be found on the [Student Ambassador Program Page](#).

## Upcoming Events

- October 11 – Student Sportsmanship Essay/Multimedia Contest Deadline
- October 20 – MIAA Educational Athletics Summit (Doubletree Westborough)
- November 9 – MIAA Sportsmanship Summit (Gillette Stadium)

## Arbiter Webinars

Arbiter is hosting webinars to kick off the new school year, covering a variety of topics for schools and users.

- **Monday, August 28:** Scheduling & Account Setup
- **Tuesday, August 29:** ArbiterPay & Payment Processes
- **Wednesday, August 30:** Student Registration
- **Thursday, August 31:** ArbiterMobile and ArbiterLive

All webinars begin at 2 p.m. To register, go to: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/rt/5837551756385367132?source=Internal>

## Calendar

- September 11 – Swim Committee
- September 12 – Field Hockey Committee
- September 12 – Soccer Committee
- September 12 – Unified Sports Committee
- September 13 – District 5 Workshop
- September 14 – Districts 2 & 3 Workshop
- September 15 – Ice Hockey Committee
- September 18 – Football Committee
- September 18 – Golf Committee
- September 18 – Volleyball Committee
- September 18 – District 7 Workshop
- September 18 – TMC - Virtual
- September 19 – Sportsmanship Committee
- September 20 – District 8 Workshop
- September 20 – Student Advisory Committee
- September 20 – Track Committee
- September 21 – MIAA Board of Directors
- September 22 – District 1 Workshop
- September 28 – Ski Committee
- October 3 – District 4 Workshop
- October 4 – District 6 Workshop
- October 4 – Gymnastics Committee
- October 5 – Lacrosse Committee

**Thanks for your continued support.**

Robert Baldwin



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